

Stages of Second Language Acquisition

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Stage I: Pre-Production

- Also called the silent period
- Up to 500 words in receptive vocabulary
- Not speaking but some may repeat everything you say (parroting)
- Will listen attentively and copy words from the board
- Respond to pictures and visuals
- Understand and may use gestures

Stage I: Things to Know

- TPR will work well
- Focus on listening comprehension activities and building receptive vocabulary
- Need much repetition
- Will benefit from a buddy translator
- Listening and trying to understand English all day is overwhelming and exhausting

Stage II: Early Production

- May last up to six months
- Receptive and expressive vocabulary of up to 1000 words
- Speak in one or two word phrases or short, memorized language chunks
- May not always use words or phrases correctly

Stage II: Things to Know

- Ask yes/no or either/or questions
- Accept one or two word answers
- Allow to participate in whole group activities
- Use pictures, visuals, real objects
- Modify content information to their level
- Focus on key vocabulary and concepts
- Use graphic organizers, charts, graphs
- Use labeling and short sentences
- Use frames to scaffold writing

Stage III: Speech Emergence

- Vocabulary of about 3000 words
- Communicate with simple words and phrases
- Ask simple questions
- Not always grammatically correct
- Will initiate short conversations with classmates
- Will understand easy stories read aloud with support of pictures
- Can do some content work with support

Stage III: Things to Know

- Can read short, modified texts in content area subjects
- Can complete graphic organizers with word banks
- Can understand and answer questions about charts and graphs
- Can match words to definitions
- Can study content area vocabulary cards
- Can understand teacher explanations and two-step directions
- Can compose brief stories based on personal experience
- Can write in journals

Stage IV: Intermediate Fluency

- Vocabulary of 6000 words
- Beginning to use more complex sentences
- Willing to express opinions and share thoughts
- Will ask for clarification
- Can work in grade level math and science with teacher support
- Comprehension of literature and social studies content is increasing
- Writing will have many grammar and spelling errors

Stage IV: Things to Know

- Students may be translating written assignments from their native language
- They can synthesize what they have learned and can make inferences
- Focus on learning strategies
- Beginning to understand more complex concepts

Stage V: Advanced Fluency

- Also called CALP – Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
- This takes from 4-10 years
- Students at near-native ability to perform academic content tasks
- Usually exited from ESL or other support programs

Stage V: Things to Know

- At the beginning of this stage they will continue to need support from the teacher, especially in history/social studies and writing

BICS and CALP

- **Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills**
- Day to day language needed to interact socially with other people
- Not very demanding
- Usually develop within 6 months to two years
- DO NOT reflect language proficiency

BICS and CALP

- **Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency**
- Refers to formal academic learning
- Listening, speaking, reading and writing about content area material
- Essential for success in school
- Usually takes five to seven years to develop (ten if no prior schooling)
- Requires development of comparing, classifying, synthesizing, evaluating, and inferring

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